



## **MEETING SUMMARY**

### **TRANS-LAKE WASHINGTON PROJECT TECHNICAL STEERING COMMITTEE MUSEUM OF HISTORY AND INDUSTRY, SEATTLE SEPTEMBER 13, 2000 — 9:00 AM TO 12:00 NOON**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Pat Serie, EnviroIssues, began the meeting with a review of the agenda. The goals for the day were to finish the screening criteria discussion begun on the August 9, 2000 meeting, receive results of the scoping comment period, and introduce the community design process. There were no questions or amendments to the agenda.

Pat also called attention to a tour of the Arboretum and the eastside nature preserves, which will take place on Saturday, October 7, 2000. Yarrow Bay wetlands and the Mercer Slough area were asked to be considered as part of the tour.

#### **RESULTS OF SCOPING INPUT**

Lorie Parker, CH2M Hill, summarized the scoping input received during the scoping period. A summary of the major findings and issues was extracted from the draft scoping report. The scoping report will be sent out by Wednesday, Sept 20, 2000, to all the committee members. There were 108 comments received by August 14, 2000, with over 300 different points to consider. The project will continue to accept scoping comments throughout the project.

Lorie pointed out that there was no agreement about what should be done, although all comments stated that something should be done. There were no requests for items that have not been considered before. Comments did include requests to look at tunneling, as well as many on high capacity transit. Many of the comments addressed mitigation and enhancement measures.

Terry Marpert, City of Redmond, asked that inclusion of bike and pedestrian facilities in all alternatives be stated explicitly in the Technical Memo on Alternatives Analysis – Draft Screening Process and Criteria. There was some discussion about this point, and language will be included in the document. Len Newstrum, Town of Yarrow Point, asked that the term ‘monorail’ be changed to something more generic for the purposes of discussion, in order to avoid confusing the discussion with the controversy surrounding the monorail in Seattle.

## **DISCUSSION OF REVISED SCREENING CRITERIA**

Lorie Parker led the discussion of the changes to the first level screening criteria, and explained how the recording, scoring and reporting of alternatives in the first level screening will occur. A concern raised at the August meeting, that the phrasing of the questions match the scoring, was addressed, and appropriate changes are reflected in the criteria questions in the document.

Doug Schulze, City of Medina, noted that the first level criteria for improving mobility and operating reliably and safely refers to the 'SR 520 corridor', while second level criteria refers to the 'Trans-Lake Washington study area'. There needs to be consistency between the two. John Perlic, Parametrix, stated that the Trans-Lake terminology may be more appropriate for both, since it does not preclude alternatives outside the SR 520 corridor. He recommended changing it to the 'Trans-Lake' wording for consistency. King Cushman, Puget Sound Regional Council, stated that performance issues for I-90 and SR 520 should be documented, as well as assumptions about the I-90 facility such as lane configuration. Barbara Gilliland, Sound Transit, stated that there will need to be some communication and coordination with the I-90 study about what recommendations will be made by that process.

There was discussion of how the first and second level screening differ from each other. Lorie Parker explained that the first level screening will look at the pieces as singular, modal alternatives. The second level, after another screening of modal alternatives, will combine the best modal alternatives in a second step into multi-modal alternatives. John Perlic noted that the second level screening criteria need to have comparison criteria that address issues such as travel time. Lorie Parker stated that the ratings in the first level will be relative ratings, since there will not be quantitative data available for all alternatives.

Dan Drais, Federal Transit Administration, asked if the cost estimates for high-capacity transit will be done using the same WSDOT methods for the first and second level screening. Don Billen, Sound Transit, replied that the Sound Transit and WSDOT cost estimators will work through the methodology issues to ensure consistency across modes of travel. Len Newstrum suggested that the criteria and alternatives be distributed well in advance of the October 4, 2000, meeting, to give sufficient time for review.

King Cushman suggested that system compatibility be more explicitly included in the criteria. This will be helpful as a qualitative assessment for Growth Management Act (GMA) plans. There is emphasis on the system in the document, but no emphasis on the policy. Bernard van de Kamp, City of Bellevue, asked if there will be underlying assumptions made about the alternatives, for example design standards. Such assumptions may influence safety and cost, and might imply that an alternative such as minimum footprint could be screened out in the first level. Jeff Peacock, Parametrix, stated that the baseline assumptions for definitions of the alternatives will be very important, and it will be possible to look at what the team used as assumptions.

There was a long discussion about cost, and how to include it in both the first and second level screenings. It was decided to have the cost reflected in the first level screening by providing it as descriptive information, not necessarily drawing conclusions about whether the cost was too high

or too low on the alternatives screening summary sheets. The points made about cost inclusion are summarized here:

- Mitch Wasserman stated that cost should not be implied to be weighted equally with other criteria. Neighborhood disruption would be a more important criterion to him than cost.
- Rob Fellows, Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), stated that the committee will have to decide how to use the cost estimates. It might be used as a ‘tie-breaker’ criterion – when deciding between two alternatives that have similar impacts on to mobility and the environment, for example. He stated that the treatment of information should be consistent across all alternatives. He also suggested not over-emphasizing costs in the first level.
- Doug Schulze suggested coming up with an average estimate, or minimum maximum range of estimates, and comparing each alternative within these ranges. The group decided that this might not properly reflect costs.
- Len Newstrum suggested that the staff supply two numbers: 1) public costs 2) public plus private costs.

Mitch Wasserman asked again that the criteria for affecting the environment in the communities - neighborhood disruption / proximity effects / cohesion - be separated into distinct criteria.

Dan Drais, Federal Transit Administration (FTA), made a note that the project team has been doing a ‘terrific job’ in dealing with this squirrely project and difficult work. There was some discussion about how much information should be represented on the summary sheet with ratings – whether it should be three or four summary criteria, or the total number of criteria listed in the first screening. John Perlic stated that it may be ambitious to develop ratings for all the criteria for all the alternatives in a single workshop, and then be able to compare them against each other.

There was general consensus that the first level screening criteria, process, and format could be passed on to the Executive Committee, with changes as suggested.

Lorie Parker moved the discussion to the second level criteria. She stated that the agreements for the concurrence points do not recognize that there are two levels of criteria that need to be agreed upon. Another opportunity will be given to review and make changes to the second level screening criteria before that screening begins. King Cushman suggested adding a criterion to capture ‘personal mobility’ to describe the overall effect of the sum of the actions of the multi-modal alternative on personal mobility. It would represent a roll-up of what is provided in the other data, with a change in focus to people movement rather than modal movement. Don Billen suggested also having a subcategory of ‘personal mobility’ under the mobility section, since people will ask for that information.

There was a discussion about the need for distinguishing between modal and system criteria, and the two parts of the second level screening. Len Newstrum suggested that the system analysis be

based strictly on the purpose and need statement. Rob Fellows stated that the modal criteria would be used to develop the multi-modal alternatives, and that the second level screening would need some form of composite measures to evaluate the system.

Jeff Peacock assured the committee that no alternatives would be dropped without explanation. The first step in the second level screening is a step to further the alternatives definition. It is more a refinement, and not a screening. The modal alternatives will be looked at within the context of the multi-modal alternatives. It was decided to take the alternatives development out of the context of the second level screening, and out of the document describing the screening process and criteria. The approach will not be changed, only the way it will be presented to the Executive Committee. There was general consensus on this issue.

Other specific comments on the mobility criteria were discussed. Eric Tweit, City of Seattle, suggested that queues on arterial streets should be measured, and included as a criterion. Eric also asked if the impact on public access to shorelines, which is not explicitly addressed in the criteria, could be captured in the document. Environmental impacts were discussed briefly. Jennifer Quan, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) asked if the fish bearing streams focused on Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species, or on all fish bearing streams. Lorie Parker indicated that it included all streams.

Eric Tweit also brought up the point that the selection of origin – destination (O-D) pairs for demonstrating travel time will have skewed results if they are selected only from densely populated areas, as opposed to also including population areas spread over a larger geographical region. Peter Dewey, University of Washington, pointed out that the reliability of the system not directly within the corridor, but influenced by it, should also be examined. The reliability of Montlake Blvd., for example, and trips from Capitol Hill to the University Village ought to be considered.

Discussion turned toward ways to quantify safety aspects. Doug Schulze pointed out that ‘safety’ was not addressed in the second level criteria. Rob Fellows stated that there should be something integral to the alternative, which affects safety, for it to have an impact on the screening. King Cushman stated that the environmental impacts of the alternative packages need to be highlighted, in the same way that impacts on mobility will be outlined. Doug Schulze mentioned that social impacts should also be included, and wondered whether there might be a way to give more weight to residential impacts versus commercial. King Cushman asked that O-D analysis consciously include lower income communities.

Costs were discussed next. Len Newstrum asked why the societal and taxpayer costs were not captured, and that there would need to be words added to make it clear whether they were included. It was also pointed out that the private costs of machines should be compared to the public cost of machines. There was some discussion about how to relate the current work to the public, given that the public feels alternatives selection was accomplished through the Trans-Lake Study Committee. Jim Leonard, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), pointed out as part of the discussion, that the EIS will contain minimal documentation of the process and conclusions of the screening process, to indicate why alternatives were not carried forward into the EIS.

Pat Serie proposed that the project team incorporate comments heard during this meeting into a revision of the technical memo by next week, and circulate that for review. Assuming all suggested changes are satisfactorily phrased, she asked for conceptual agreement on the contents of the document. There was general consensus that it would be sufficient to take this as agreement. The technical memo would be distributed for comments, and a final version incorporating last minute comments would be circulated before September 27, 2000, when it would be presented to the Executive Committee.

## **SCHEDULE ACCELERATION**

Rob Fellows gave an overview of the reasons and ways in which the schedule for concluding the EIS process might be accelerated. At the July 2000, the Executive Committee specifically asked for ways the process might be accelerated. The collision of the barge with the bridge a few weeks later provided further impetus for this request, at which point the State Transportation Commission specifically directed the project team to find ways to accelerate the schedule. A three day Value Analysis (VA) was conducted by WSDOT and Sound Transit. Results of that VA are to be presented to the Transportation Commission on September 20. A summary of the findings of that VA process will be distributed to all three committees before the Commission presentation. Some proposals are being made that would take time out of the EIS, while maintaining commitment to environmental issues and community involvement.

The committee declined to meet on the morning of September 27, 2000, to react to possible changes to the project schedule before the Executive Committee meeting, as well as take a final look at the screening criteria before presentation to the Executive Committee. They decided instead to deal with both issues via email with the project team. Lorie Parker asked committee members to meet with their elected representatives to test the first level screening criteria with them, as the Executive Committee will be reviewing the criteria only a week before they are to be used in the first level screening.

## **COMMUNITY DESIGN PROCESS**

Jeff Peacock gave an overview of the community based design workshops. He stated that the project team has a deep commitment toward keeping this a community-based process. The design workshops are envisioned as 3-4 intensive workshops in each of several geographic locations. Participants will include representatives of community groups and business groups, who will help define values and principles, measures of success, and alternatives for building in the community. They will likely start in October. Decisions about alternatives will not be made in these workshops, but they will provide very specific public input that will help shape the alternatives. The process will be led by an architectural firm and will help people visualize the thoughts and concepts. Jeff asked committee members to think about individuals in their communities who would be interested in making the commitment to the workshops, the process, and the work involved.

Comments on the community design process included the following:

- Alternatives should be fixed at the time of the workshops, to focus the discussion.

- Timing of the workshops within the rest of the process is crucial; it should be clear that it fits within a two-step structured process.
- Local jurisdictional staff will be able to provide important information about the local area.
- Committee members should forward ideas about the community design process to the project team.

## **UPCOMING MEETING SCHEDULE, ACTION ITEMS**

Pat Serie reviewed the upcoming meeting schedule, and reminded committee members about the tour of the sensitive areas.

## **MEETING HANDOUTS**

- Agenda
- Excerpt from Scoping Report – Major findings and issues
- Technical Memorandum – Alternatives Analysis – Draft Screening Process and Criteria (September 5, 2000)
- Sample First Level Screening Evaluation Results
- Technical Memorandum – Alternatives Proposed for First Level Screening (Working Draft) (September 7, 2000)
- Comments received on Draft Screening Criteria from Technical Steering Committee Members
- Invitation for tour of Arboretum and nature preserves
- Meeting Schedule

## **ACTION ITEMS**

- Give heads up to representatives on Executive Committee about first level screening criteria.
- Review Technical Memo draft after September 20, and submit comments to project team.
- Relay reactions to the potential schedule changes to the project team before September 27.
- RSVP to EnviroIssues about arboretum/nature preserve tour by September 29.
- Identify individuals to engage in the community design workshops.
- Give suggestions for community design workshops to the project team.

## **MEETING ATTENDEES**

### *Committee Members*

<b>Present</b>	<b>Name</b>		<b>Organization</b>
	Arndt	Jim	City of Kirkland
X	Billen	Don	Sound Transit
	Bowman	Jennifer	Federal Transit Administration
X			(Dan Drais)
	Brooks	Allyson	Washington State Office of Archaeology and Historic Preservation
	Conrad	Richard	City of Mercer Island
X	Cushman	King	Puget Sound Regional Council
X	Dewey	Peter	University of Washington
	Fisher	Larry	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
X	Francis	Roy	King County Department of Transportation
	Gibbons	Tom	National Marine Fisheries Service
X	Kennedy	Jack	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
	Kenny	Ann	Washington Department of Ecology
	Kircher	Dave	Puget Sound Clean Air Agency
X	Leonard	Jim	Federal Highway Administration
X	Marpert	Terry	City of Redmond
X	Newstrum	Len	Town of Yarrow Point
	Rave	Krista	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
X	Pratt	Austin	U.S. Coast Guard, 13 <sup>th</sup> District
	Sanchez	Susan	City of Seattle
X			(Eric Tweit)
X	Schulze	Doug	City of Medina
	Sparman	Goran	City of Bellevue
X			(Bernard van de Kamp)
	Sullivan	Maureen	WSDOT – NW Region
	Teachout	Emily	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
X			(Jennifer Quan)
X	Wasserman	Mitch	City of Clyde Hill
	Willis	Joe	Town of Hunts Point

*Other attendees:*

Pete Beaulieu, Puget Sound Regional Council  
Kimberly Farley, WSDOT OUM

*Project Team*

Barbara Gilliland, Sound Transit  
Rob Fellows, WSDOT  
Lorie Parker, CH2M Hill  
Pat Serie, EnviroIssues  
Jeff Peacock, Parametrix  
John Perlic, Parametrix  
Daryl Wendle, Parametrix  
Paul Hezel, EnviroIssues  
Amy Grotefendt, EnviroIssues

PJH